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FOIA

NFAC-161-78

13 JAN 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR: George L. Cary
Legislative Counsel

FROM : Sayre Stevens
Deputy Director, National Foreign
Assessment Center

SUBJECT : NFAC Comments Concerning Amendments
to the Freedom of Information Act

REFERENCE : Your Memorandum, dated 30 December
1977, Same Subject (OL 77-5748)

1. In general, NFAC is supportive of the concepts of the Freedom of Information Act. To date the manhours devoted to servicing FOIA and related requests have not been of a scale to disrupt significantly the intelligence production activities of any NFAC component. Nevertheless, no resources have been provided for FOIA and related activities and all such efforts detract from the basic tasks. Statistics for the year 1977 reflect a significant upward swing over the previous year in the number of FOIA and related requests -- more than 60 percent increase in 1977 compared with 1976 -- being levied on the Agency. This trend holds the distinct probability that NFAC assets will be increasingly diverted from intelligence production activities to handling requests from the public.

2. Having wrestled with FOIA requests for the past several years, NFAC components have surfaced a number of problem areas that can only be resolved by amending or clarifying the existing act. Of particular concern is the matter addressed in a memorandum from the Chief, NFAC Coordination Staff which can be found at Tab A. To be sure, the problem of trust of foreign governments in US secrecy agreements stems more from the climate of the times than it